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EXAMINER

FISCHER, JUSTIN R

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Continuation of 11: Applicant initially contends that Ogawa is not directed to a runflat tire construction. The examiner agrees. However, in view of Cottrell, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have found it obvious to include a runflat insert in the tire of Ogawa in order to obtain improved running during an underinflated condition. In particular, Cottrell, in a similar manner to Ogawa, is directed to a tire comprising a non-conventional carcass structure (formed of individual cords as opposed to calendared plies). Thus, there would have been a reasonable expectation of success in modifying the tire of Ogawa in view of Cottrell. It is emphasized that one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been amply motivated to include a runflat insert in the tire of Ogawa as set forth above.

In regards to the vertical distance between the bead base and the bead core, applicant argues that the relevant distance T4 is not vertical distance but rather is the shortest distance from the bead bottom face to the carcass cord. First, the relevant distance is in fact a vertical distance because it is measured in a direction that is perpendicular to the inclination of the bead core and the bead seat. In modifying Ogawa in view of Ueyoko, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have recognized that the relevant distance is vertical since the bead core and rim of Ogawa are not inclined. Thus, the distance would have been a true radial measurement. Second, a fair reading of Ueyoko generally suggests that a distance between the carcass cord and the bead base is restricted to a value between 1 and 6 times the carcass cord diameter in order to provide a strong engagement force and contribute to bead durability. It is emphasized that these benefits are directly analogous

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to the alleged benefits of the claimed invention. Furthermore, in modifying the structure of Ogawa, the relevant distance would be between the carcass and the bead base, wherein the carcass is directly wrapped around the bead core (different from the loose carcass wrapping of Ueyoko). Absent any conclusive showing of unexpected results, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have readily appreciated the claimed distance between the bead core and the bead base, it being noted that the claims include an absolute value and tire dimensions are highly dependent on the size and intended use of the tire.

Regarding Table 1, a comparison between Examples 2 and 4 does not provide a conclusive showing of unexpected results for a distance of not more than 3 millimeters. These results have been addressed in the previous communication (see Paragraph 5). It is emphasized that one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, in view of Ueyoko, would have made the distance in Ogawa as small as possible as long as cracking does not occur as such an arrangement provides a strong engagement between the tire and the rim and thus contributes to bead durability. Again, the differences in durability and bead securing force are not seen to constitute a conclusive showing of unexpected results, particularly in view of Ueyoko.

Lastly, regarding Ogawa, applicant contends that it is unclear if deformation at the lower bead portion is recognized by the non-runflat tires of the prior art. However, as set forth above, Ueyoko, which is directed to a non-runflat tire construction, specifically describes a benefit of increased engagement force and ultimately, increased bead durability. These benefits are clearly desirable in all tire constructions, including

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non-runflat and runflat tire constructions. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been amply motivated to form the relevant distance as small as possible without cracking to obtain the aforementioned benefits.

Regarding claims 7 and 8, as set forth in the previous communication, Ogawa fails to expressly disclose the claimed features. However, the reference is directed to embodiments having a high carcass turnup structure and such an embodiment appears to satisfy the claimed features. It is further noted that (a) applicant has not challenged the examiner's assertion that such a high carcass turnup structure satisfies the claimed invention and (b) applicant has not provided a conclusive showing of unexpected results to establish a criticality for the claimed arrangement.

Justin Fischer

/Justin R Fischer/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1791